

# the chronicle

Youngsters enjoy a festive success with card designs

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Call to sign up for Beacon Centre's mountain adventure

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Licensed for spirits - spooky guide to pubs

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To all of our readers

## Booze-drug killer alert for revellers

REVELLERS in Dudley were given a stark health warning on the risks of mixing alcohol and drugs.

Members of awareness group, safe & sound, spoke with drinkers and party-goers in Sedgley and Stourbridge.

The team hit the streets of the two towns with a hard-hitting message about the potentially lethal substance cocaine, created by the body when alcohol and cocaine are mixed.

In Stourbridge participating bars displayed information and party goers who turn on their bluetooth systems on their mobile phones received a message directly telling them where they can get more information.

The campaign, run by Dudley's community safety partnership, is called drop dead gorgeous and features a graphic image of a reveller who has suffered from the consequences.

## Fumes leave night workers with sore eyes

EIGHT staff at a Black Country hospital were treated for sore eyes after a chemical scare.

A one-litre tub of clear liquid was found with no lid in a laundry and storage room at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital last Tuesday night.

The fumes it was giving off had been affecting the eyes of staff using the ground floor room. It is thought the liquid could have been a mix of cleaning products.

Fire crews were called to the scene at about 10pm.

Eight workers were treated for eye irritation but none was thought to have suffered serious injuries. The container of liquid was unlabelled, said crew manager Andrew Papworth, of Brierley Hill Fire Station.

No patients were affected by the fumes.

## Making a date with Age UK

A 2011 calendar featuring scenic photographs taken around Dudley are available from Age UK. The calendar has been compiled by the Leap Over 60 Project.

The calendars cost £4 and are available from Age UK Dudley at The Junction in Cradley Road, Netherton. Call 01384 343535 or visit [www.ageukdudley.org.uk](http://www.ageukdudley.org.uk)

## Food for thought at zoo

ANIMALS at Dudley Zoo are providing food for thought as stars of a new calendar to help good causes.

Some of the exotic residents there have been pictured tucking into their favourite meals with a Best of British theme.

Each month features a picture highlighting an aspect of the zoo's policy of buying British – and if possible Midland-grown – food for its animals.

### Moat

Zoo spokeswoman Jill Hitchman said: "It's not a new story, we've been doing it since 1937 when the zoo opened, but it has one or two surprises.

"Few people know that bamboo for our red pandas is grown in the moat of an ancient Shropshire manor house.

"We are really pleased with the calendar, it looks fantastic."

Proceeds from the £6.99 calendar will go towards supporting lemurs in the wild in Madagascar and Help for Heroes.



Keepers Nicola Wright, left, and Sophie Dugmore with Dudley Zoo's 2011 Best of British calendar which highlights its exotic species and their favourite foods

## Hospital 'red alert' status is removed

A HOSPITAL in the Black Country has been taken off "red alert" after slashing accident and emergency waiting times.

Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley had been categorized as a high risk after repeatedly missing targets for patient waiting times. But just 12 months on, NHS regulator Monitor has removed the "red" rating and downgraded it by two levels to "amber-green".

Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the hospital, was placed on red alert after falling short of the target which stated that 98 per cent of A&E patients should be seen within four hours, with a score of 97.96 per cent.

Monitor spokesman Michael Moruzzi said: "Since then, the trust has demonstrated considerable progress towards addressing our concerns and has robust plans in place to continue to do so."

"Having considered this, Monitor's board decided to remove Dudley Group of Hos-

pitals from significant breach, and assign a lower risk rating for governance."

Monitor classifies each NHS trust as one of four risk ratings – green, amber-green, red-amber, and red.

Nearly £1 million was invested in the A&E department by the trust after being placed in the worst category. Extra senior medical staff posts were created and 60 new members of staff were recruited to help ease waiting times. A consultancy firm was also drafted in at a cost of £160,000.

### Determination

Tur chief executive Paula Clark said: "The trust has worked hard over the last 12 months to improve."

"We are proud that we have gone from a position where we were narrowly missing the target to one where we are now one of the best performing trusts in the region."

"I would like to thank the staff across the trust for all their hard work and determination to help improve our performance."

# DOUBLE DELIGHT AT LOTTERY CASH

**T**WO Dudley organisations are toasting in the New Year more than £16,000 richer after being awarded grants to fund their community work.

Dudley African Community Trust and Llapal Primary School earned £9,990 and £6,650 respectively from the Big Lottery Fund after applying for grants earlier this year.

They could ask for between £300 and £10,000 from the Awards for All programme, which hands

By TIM SPIERS

Dudleychrons@expressandstar.co.uk

out money to community groups and charities.

Grants had to be for a specific project or activity and the Dudley winners are two of 84 across the West Midlands to receive the good news.

Vanessa Kokongantso recently established Dudley African Community Trust and said the money would go towards cookery classes for families from minority backgrounds.

### Brilliant

Some funds will also go towards organisational development training for the group's management committee.

"We're very, very pleased," she said.

"We have 28 members and this is just brilliant news."

John Taylor, head of Big Lottery Fund in the West Midlands, said the Trust was a deserving cause.

"Dudley African Community Trust's family cooking project will bring together budding cooks of all ages and backgrounds to prepare healthy dishes in a fun, friendly atmosphere."

"Many people in Dudley stand to benefit by learning new skills and mixing with other members of the local community."

"It is a very worthy project and I'm delighted that the Big Lottery Fund is able to support it in this way."

Meanwhile, Llapal Primary School in Haleoswen will use their £6,650 windfall to fund a

pond and garden area. They applied for the money through the extended schools project and Emma Tolley, the school's senior leader with responsibility for community, will oversee it with used.

Jeanette Mackinney, consultant headteacher at Llapal, said: "They money will make a real impact on the children."

"We're absolutely delighted and work will start in the New Year."

Mr Taylor added: "I would encourage people across the West Midlands to seize the moment and apply to the Big Lottery Fund's Awards for All programme for funding that can make their ideas a reality in 2011. A lottery grant could be a great start to the New Year for hundreds more local community groups."

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# When canals cut the way for industry

In many ways the face of Netherton today has been shaped by the various kinds of transport used in the past.

The canals made a big difference to the area by paving the way for industrial growth.

According to the book Netherton by historian Ned Williams many of the major works were built with a view to being served by the canal.

The opening of an 11-mile stretch of waterway spurred a colliery revival.

The launch of the Dudley No 2

canal in May 1798 revived works around Netherton.

Other methods of transport have also had an impact on Netherton.

The construction of the turnpike road leading from Dudley to Halesowen and on to Bromsgrove is what put Netherton on the map in the first place while residential development in Netherton at the end of the 19th century was helped by the electric tramway.

Meanwhile 20th century housing schemes prompted the Midland Red company to provide more services to Netherton.

These days the road network is the quickest way to get around Netherton but images from Mr Williams' book show how busy the canals were in years gone by.

An image from the book dating back to April 1984 shows a large group of people celebrating after restoration work was completed near the Netherton Tunnel to solve subsidence issues which first flared in 1902.

Trevor Luckcuck, from the British Waterways Board, reopened the tunnel in a boat-based ceremony in 1984.

The tunnel opened in August 1858 and provided direct access from the Dudley No.2 canal to the rest of the Birmingham Canal Navigation's System at Tividale.

One of Netherton's forgotten means of transport is the old railway line. In the early 1960s, mainline trains were often diverted along the tracks via the Bumble Hole line, which ran between Dudley and Old Hill.

Trains would stop at Baptist End Halt and Darby End Halt, as well as a proper station at Windmill End when the line opened in 1878.

• Pictures and information supplied by Netherton by Ned Williams



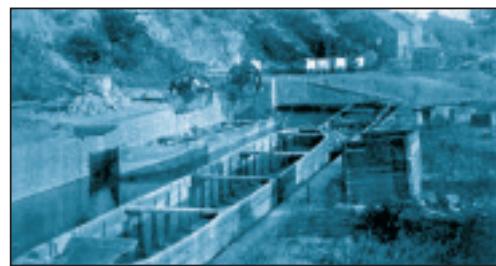
A steam train gets diverted along the Bumble Hole Line in the early 1960s



The Baptist End Halt on the Bumble Hole Line, pictured in August 1962



British Waterways' Trevor Luckcuck reopens Netherton Tunnel in 1984



Part of Dudley NO.2 Canal to Worcester and Birmingham Canal in 1905

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## Pupils' writing boosted by film

A FILM showing Black Country children the work of the emergency services has won a top award for also improving their writing skills.

Called Emergency!, the film features actors, schoolchildren, members of the emergency services and real lifesavers.

After watching the film, youngsters write about what they have learned including why not to make hoax calls, fire safety and what to do in an emergency.

And the project has now won an award for raising literacy levels, after children showed they improved when writing about the film.

### Maths

Sandwell's Mayor, Councillor Pauline Hinton, presented the award to representatives from the council and the emergency services.

The film is being used at Sandwell primary schools and has been so popular that a similar programme concentrating on improving maths has also been launched.

The Maths With The Emergency Services project was launched on December 10 and includes online material allowing students to do maths puzzles faced by police and fire services.

The aim is to make the children feel like they are addressing real problems, rather than just sums from a work book. The project will also involve trips to fire and police stations.

# Rat-infested takeaway: Boss must pay £1,200

THE owner of a rat-infested Dudley takeaway that had mould on the walls and grease on the ceiling has been ordered to pay almost £1,200.

Health inspectors who visited Happy Evergrace Chinese Takeaway in Tipton issued an emergency order to close the premises because they feared it posed a risk to customers. At West Bromwich Magistrates Court, owner Wai Hoong Woo admitted three charges of breaking food hygiene laws.

Emma Hall, prosecuting, said inspectors found gnawing marks in the skirting boards and rat holes and rat droppings when they visited the Laburnum Road takeaway last month. Miss Hall said there was food debris on the floor and there were scissors, a chip scoop and a can opener covered in grease and encrusted food.

As well as the rat holes and droppings there was spilled rat bait at the rear of the premises plus cooked prawns mixed with raw chicken and raw prawns. The fridges was dirty and there were discoloured tiles. A light switch was covered in grease and some of the door hinges were broken. "There were extremely poor standards of cleanliness," Miss Hall said.

"There was evidence of rat activity. It was indicative of little or no routine cleaning."

Officers closed the premises but Miss Hall said since the inspection, the restaurant had been sterilised and disinfected and allowed to reopen.

Woo, who runs the takeaway with his wife, chose to represent himself at last week's hearing.

The 50-year-old, of Nuttall Grove, Handsworth, said he had not had much time to clean in recent months because he had been occupied by a gang that hung outside the takeaway.

On one occasion, he said, they had thrown a lit firework into the shop.

"I have been in this business 40 years and never had this problem before. I have major problems with people outside. I spend 80 per cent of my time trying to stop kids causing trouble and 20 per cent of the time cleaning."

Woo was fined £280 and ordered to pay £902 costs plus a £15 victim surcharge.

## Charity seeks stars of future

A HALESOWEN charity is launching a new X Factor-style competition for musicians of all ages.

The Halesowen Foundation, which offers financial support to support to learners who have demonstrated talents and abilities specifically in sport and music, is running the event to find fresh talent.

Youngsters will be performing in front of judges on Saturday February 12, 2011 in four categories, digital music and percussion; brass and woodwind, piano and voice and strings and voice.

There are also three age groups, under 11s, 11-15 and aged 16 plus.

Winners from each category and age range will be invited to a celebration dinner at Halesowen

College's restaurant where trophies and certificates will be presented.

Keith Bate, Director, said: "This is the first year we have held this competition and we are really eager to see the range of talented young people. I know already that the judges will have a really difficult decision."

### Exciting

"I would urge everyone to get their entry forms filled in as soon as possible to be part of this exciting new competition."

Entry forms and the terms and conditions can be downloaded from Halesowen Foundation's website www.halesowenfoundation.org. The closing date for entries is January 14.

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## Young designers impress



Card winners - left, Sophie Hall with Halesowen Chronicle sales team leader Annette Ford and Sue Harvey of Furbysings Furniture, sponsors of the winning design.

Right, advertising supervisor Glyn Law with winner Ellie Marsh



CREATIVE Black Country youngsters have had their artwork printed as Christmas cards in a competition run by The Chronicle.

Their designs were printed in the paper and readers voted for the seasonal greeting they would most like to send to families and friends.

In October 48 children from Cotwall End Primary School in Sedgley entered the competition and Ellie Marsh's

Christmas tree design was voted tops.

She was presented with a box of Christmas cards copied from her design for her to send out to family and friends and a framed card to keep.

Chronicle advertising manager Glyn

Law made the presentation. The school also received a £50 cheque in the competition sponsored by Chilli and Creme of Sedgley.

In Blackheath, eight-year-old Sophie Hall's work impressed the readers.

### Winning

The Blackheath Primary School pupil also collected a box of cards with her design and framed card from Halesowen Chronicle sales team leader Annette

Ford. Also at the presentation was Sue Harvey of Furbysings Furniture, sponsors of the winning design. Nearly 50 pupils at the school entered the competition.

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Terri-Louise's seashells vase



This is a recent cameo vase creation



Terri-Louise Colledge, one of the last remaining traditional cameo artists



Terri-Louise Colledge works on a new mermaid piece

# When every day is just like Christmas



NERVOUSLY waiting for her colourful pieces to come out of the fiery furnace, Terri-Louise Colledge admits that every day for her feels like Christmas.

The 50-year-old, who lives in Coseley, is one of the last remaining traditional cameo artists in the country.

Her work is so close to that of the 19th century glassworkers, such as Thomas Webb, that she has been commissioned by a museum to create a piece to add to their collection.

Broadfield House Glass Museum in Kingswinford has a cameo room, which originally inspired Terri-Louise to go into that type of glass design.

Terri-Louise, who lives in Upper Ettingshall Road, Hurst Hill, is now in talks with the museum to discuss the type of piece that would fit in to their collection.

"It can take a couple of months to make a cameo piece as they are so intricate," says Terri-Louise.

Black Country grandmother Terri-Louise Colledge has been asked to create a piece of glasswork for a popular museum. The established cameo artist spoke to CATHY SPENCER

"To make a cameo I get the piece of glass when it is all white and then draw a design on sticky-backed plastic," she added.

"I put the plastic onto the vase and sandblast it down to the colour underneath using a dentist's drill."

## Beautiful

"Cameos show the different layers of coloured glass and they do look beautiful."

Terri-Louise, who is married to

husband Michael, has two children, Delyse, aged 25, and Jordan, 21, as well as a grandson, Tyler, aged 6.

"I loved art at school and the teachers never picked me out as being anything special."

"But I knew I wanted to be a painter," said the former High Arcal School pupil.

"I never thought I was anything exceptional but now when people see my work they are amazed."

Terri-Louise is now based at Wordsley-based Okra Glass, where she works as a freelance decorating the items it produces.

Established in 1979, the firm is one of the most successful glass studios in Britain and specialises in creating gifts and limited edition pieces including perfume bottles, vases and paperweights.

She said: "People ask if the beautiful glass items become boring to us after so long. But I have to admit that waiting for the furnace to open in the morning, to see how each piece has turned out, makes you feel like a child on Christmas Day."



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## Making a difference as 2011 challenges emerge

THIS year we have witnessed some of the deepest cuts ever made to public services with ordinary families hit the hardest but there's more bad news to come with VAT going up as we start the New Year.

That's going to mean higher prices on almost everything we buy, right on the back of Christmas, the most expensive time of the year. It's the worst possible time for the Tory Government to increase VAT from 17.5 to 20 per cent.

Just as the economy is clawing its way back to recovery people here in Dudley will be hit hard by the increase, consumer demand will be affected and economic activity slowed.

Despite the worrying signs that the Government's plans are hitting jobs and growth, they are insisting on going ahead with this unfair tax increase on the British public.

Increasing VAT is wrong for so many reasons. It will hurt motorists as petrol prices rise. It will hurt those families and pensioners when they go to the shops. And it will hurt small businesses many of whom will not want to pass on the increase in VAT to their customers.

Perhaps most significantly the VAT hike is also a "jobs tax". It is estimated that the VAT attack will hit 250,000 jobs, three times the number associated with Labour's alternative to the VAT rise - an increase in National Insurance Contributions.

In the General Election campaign George Osborne said the Conservatives had no plans to increase VAT.

David Cameron acknowledged that VAT rises hit the poorest hardest.

This year we have seen the deepest cuts to public services in a generation with cuts to Child Tax Credit, the number of Police Officers on our streets and most over 65's losing £2,300 a year.

We have seen big cuts to our Higher Education budgets and huge hike in tuition fees, however I worked hard alongside local residents on several campaigns that have made things better for

families here in Dudley.

Forcing the Government to U-turn on scrapping Cold Weather Payments:

In October, the week before the Government announced its public services, I stood up during Prime Minister's Questions to demand David Cameron come clean over Government plans to cut emergency cold weather payments to the four million poorest families and pensioners.

I launched my campaign to get this decision overturned after I found that the small print of this year's Emergency Cold Payment made no mention of £25 increase people have received over the two previous years.

I was horrified to see

that the government were willing to cut the money local pensioners and families receive

when the temperature drops below freezing for



Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin takes the stand in our weekly Chronicle column which gives our local representatives the chance to air their views on issues that matter

work hard together we can force the council into action.

Working with Dudley residents to change car clamping laws:

The news that the government is finally introducing tough penalties against car clammers in a real victory for people here in Dudley.

I've been campaigning against bully-boy car clammers ever since two constituents contacted me after their car was seized from Tower Street in the town centre.

I'm delighted we are nearing an outright ban that will protect my constituents in the future.

These victories show politics does make a difference. With more deep cuts around the corner we are going to have to make sure that we continue to work together for change.



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# Film puts focus on dyslexia sufferers

KRISSEY, the star of a new Black Country made film, has these words to say to schools: "I'm not stupid. The teachers just don't understand me."

Young Wordsley film maker Dan Evans, managing director of Expressive Arts Productions, has produced the DVD – called *Musik* – with the help of family and friends, a Star Wars actor, the famous Pinewood Studios, local schools and an Aston Martin supercar.

And Dan achieved all of that with a budget of just £5,000. Jeremy Bulloch, who played Boba Fett in Star Wars films and Edwin in the Cliff Richard movie *Summer Holiday*, appears in the film.

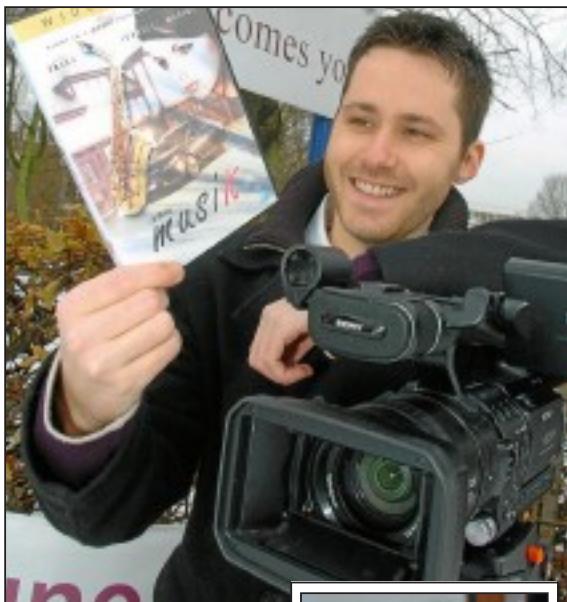
He plays Krissey's maths teacher in *Musik*, which aims to inspire people with dyslexia. It is about a teenage girl who is labelled 'stupid' and faces torment from bullies at school.

## Producing

A fifth of the profits from sales will go to the British Dyslexia Association, which is promoting the film through its newsletters and magazines.

Dan, aged 22, of Swanfield Road, Wordsley, who specialises in producing corporate, commercial and training DVDs, music videos and films, shot *Musik* at Pinewood Studios, The Wordsley School, The Brier special school in Kingswinford and a friend's mock medieval mansion in Lainswood, Wordsley.

Krissey, played by 19-year-old Natasha Bennett – a Gornal singer whose stage name is Taisa – turns her life around by learning to play the saxophone, determined to show the world that being dyslexic does not stop her from being successful. Along the way viewers learn a lot



Film maker Dan Evans and, inset, Natasha Bennett

more about how dyslexia is diagnosed – and that people with the condition are often intelligent, creative and successful.

The script was written by Dan's girlfriend, musician Joanne Naylor, aged 23, of Wolverhampton Road, Sedgley, who plays the saxophone.

"Joanne really researched the subject well, reading books about it and talking to people she knows with dyslexia," said Dan, who gained a BTEC National Diploma in media – moving image at Halesowen College.

"We wanted to raise awareness that people with dyslexia are not stupid but have a different way of thinking and a different perspective on life."

"In our film Krissey, who is aged 15, comes out of her shell when she learns to play the saxophone and she enters a talent show at school."

The DVD costs £4.50, a download is 95p and downloadable streams are available for 45p (SD) or 60p (HD).



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## Death of charity pioneer

A REVERED charity pioneer whose determined nature influenced people and organisations throughout Stourbridge has died.

Jock Poyner MBE, former mayor of Stourbridge, secretary of Stourbridge FC, headmaster of Tenterfields Primary School and joint-founder of Mary Stevens Hospice was 89 when he passed away at Russells Hall Hospital.

Tributes have been made to the "very approachable, pleasant and positive thinking

Mr Poyner, who was born in Edinburgh in 1921. Son David led the adulation to his father, whose funeral took place last Tuesday at St Mary's Church, Oldswinford.

"Someone once called him Mr Stourbridge for all he'd done for the town and I think that about sums him up."

He leaves behind a widow, Dr Brenda Clarke, two sons, 14 grandchildren and six grandchildren.

# Delight as three-year mosque bid approved

## Special delivery – by reindeer

PUPILS got an early Christmas present delivered on a sleigh pulled by two reindeer.

At the Brier School, Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, Santa's Elf, played by a staff member, gave out presents to pupils from a sleigh drawn by the reindeer.

Each pupil received a present from the school paid for by fundraising events during the year.

Pupils were able to meet the reindeer before being given their presents. There were soft toys for younger pupils and model cars and games for older ones.

Parents also joined with pupils for the annual Christmas fair. Pupils met Father Christmas in his grotto and received a selection box.

Nursery nurse Carol Millward said: "It was a very special day and having the reindeer bring in the presents added to the magic."

"It was great to see all the parents come in for the Christmas fair."



Enjoying receiving presents and a visit by Tide the reindeer to The Brier School, Kingswinford, are pupils Laura Beasley, aged 10, and Justin Adams, 11

WORSHIPPERS in Dudley are "delighted" after permission to build a £1.2million mosque was given the go-ahead.

The proposals for the Rizvia Mosque in Trinity Street were granted by Dudley Council development control committee chiefs at a meeting on December 13.

The decision to build the mosque and community centre comes three years after a parking dispute forced leaders to withdraw their plans in 2007.

Under the new proposals the existing mosque will be demolished and in its place will be a contemporary two-storey building with glass dome and minaret.

Some 150 people, who have been using the former scout hut for daily worship, since 1998, will benefit from the renovation.

Rizvia general secretary, Mohammed Amin, said: "This has been going on for such a long time and even through all of the issues that we encountered we have managed to win our fight and we are now all delighted with the result."

"The new mosque and community centre will be a huge asset to all of the community as well as the Muslim faith. Although the scout hut has served us well it is very small and we are all looking forward to a larger space to pray and hold events."

### School extension scheme

PLANS to extend a Halesowen primary school have been lodged with council chiefs in Dudley. The work proposed for Our Lady and St Kenelm's RC Primary School, in Bunde Hill, would see new toilets created along with a new cloakroom area and stairwell. A planning application has been submitted.

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# DNA marker 'grease' to be used in crime hotspots



Pc Linda Tooth checks a door handle with a UV light for the new DNA marker

A HI-TECH scheme using special DNA markers to combat burglaries has been launched by police in the Black Country.

Officers in Dudley are introducing the "SelectaDNA" grease, designed to stick to thieves' clothing and skin, at homes and businesses across the borough with a view to extending it to neighbouring units Sandwell and Wolverhampton. The liquid

is invisible except under UV light, and can be smeared on to anything from TVs and Playstations, to door handles and jewellery.

The grease is made up of tiny discs each with an eight-digit serial number, unique to each house registered with the service.

Detective sergeant Mark Rushton said the grease was tough to wash off skin, and

nearly impossible to get off clothes, meaning police could tell if a suspect had been in contact with stolen goods.

He said he hoped to have all homes in high-risk areas kitted with SelectaDNA, with stickers for windows and doors, warning potential burglars. A trial in Kates Hill, one of the 'hotspots' identified in 2007, had cut burglaries by 52 per cent.

## Benefit fiddle of teacher in debt

A BLACK Country supply teacher has been spared jail after falsely claiming more than £44,000 in benefits.

Ray Lester, aged 53, failed to declare that he was working for seven years while being paid incapacity, housing and council tax benefit.

Lester, of Downfield Drive, Sedgley, was handed a 36-week sentence suspended for two years at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

Judge Martin Walsh told him: "Most people receive benefits honestly and have to live under the financial constraints that come with that."

The judge added: "You did not do this."

Lester pleaded guilty to two counts of dishonestly failing to notify the authorities of a change

in his circumstances. The court heard that between December 2002 when he started working, and September 2009, he received £25,531 incapacity benefit and £18,692 housing and council tax benefit.

Mr Lester had started claiming benefits legitimately in September 1995 when he suffered from depression.

### Reduced

But, he had racked up debts of £20,000 and started falsely claiming in 2002 to pay them off.

The debt had now been reduced to £4,000, Mr Chawla added.

Since 2002 he had worked "almost continuously" in a number of temporary teaching and lecturing jobs across the West

Midlands after gaining an IT qualification. He earned up to £20 an hour, the court heard.

Miss Amanda Tomkins, defending, said Lester had not told the authorities he had started work again in 2002 as he "did not know if he would be able to hold down a long-term job".

She added: "Due to the debts he had built up he made the decision to use the extra money to pay them off."

Judge Walsh said he could have sent Lester to custody but had been persuaded to save him from jail as the claims were not dishonest from the outset.

Lester was ordered to carry out 240 hours of unpaid community work. He must also undergo supervision from the probation service for 18 months.

## Pensioners get free tax advice

NEARLY 20 pensioners from the Dudley area took advantage of a special, free tax surgery with a financial expert.

Steven Holden, associate and tax and trust manager at Halesowen-based MFG Solicitors, provided advice on tax affairs for pensioners with an annual household income of £17,000 or less at Age UK in Birdcage Walk, Dudley.

The event was organised by independent charity Tax Help for Older People.

Mr Holden said: "These tax surgeries are a great idea. It takes us into the heart of the towns like Dudley and in front of people in a place where they're comfortable and relaxed."

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Sarah was a pupil at Halesowen Road School, the Iron School, and is seen here at the age of 21



The family with Sarah when she was 104 - from left, Joyce Rivers, Michael, Roy and Bryan Edge



A smile for the camera - Sarah enjoying family time at a party held at her son Roy's house



Sarah Edge on her 100th birthday with the telegram from the Queen

# A century of history for Sarah

SARAH EDGE, the oldest woman in the Dudley borough, if not the Midlands, has died at the age of 105.

Sarah (née White) was born at Mousessweet Cottage, Netherton, on March 14, 1905.

Known as Sally to her friends, she attended Halesowen Road School in Netherton, commonly known as the Iron School due to the fact it was constructed entirely of corrugated iron.

Each morning before school Sarah delivered milk from her grandfather's dairy farm using a small horse-cart.

One of seven children born to Ellen and Edward, a builder, Sarah shared a bed with two of her sisters in the cramped two-bedroom cottage while their two brothers slept in the same room behind a partition. The family had few luxuries but Sarah enjoyed singing in the choir at Spring Meadow

Baptist Chapel, Old Hill. At more than 90 years old she could remember all the words to her favourite hymn, The Old Rugged Cross.

She also vividly remembered the sight of seeing an enormous German Zeppelin airship whirring in the skies above her home following the advent of the First World War.

After leaving school at 14, Sarah went to work at D Leonard & Co, one of the main firms in Birmingham's then-booming pen industry.

## Nuggets

She worked there for seven years, and one of her duties was collecting gold nuggets from the Jewellery Quarter to be moulded into fountain pen nibs.

In her early 20s, Sarah met Charles, a local toolmaker, through a mutual friend. They married in June 1930 at St Andrews Church, Nether-

ton, with Sarah walking all the way to church in her wedding dress.

Less than a year later their first child arrived, a daughter named Joyce, soon followed by three sons: Bryan, Michael and Roy.

Michael was born on a hot night in July 1943, when Britain was under wartime blackout. Charles and Sarah - who was then heavily in labour - received a warning from the air-raid warden for allowing a beam of light to escape from a window they had opened a crack to let some air into the house.

The young family lived at first with Charles' parents in Claremont Street, Cradley Heath, later moving to Linton Road, Old Hill. Sarah was more at home in the garden than the kitchen, and had a particular talent for propagating plants and bushes.

She also enjoyed weekend jaunts to seaside towns such as Bournemouth

Sarah Edge saw two world wars, travelled across the globe at the age of 70 and lived to the age of 105. Her grand-daughter Abigail Edge looks back on Sarah's life.

and Weston-super-Mare. She was an active member of the Haden Hill Darby and Joan Club, with which, on one occasion, visited the Isle of Skye.

At the age of 70 she travelled abroad for the first time, visiting her youngest son Roy who lived in Australia and spending six months in Perth. Roy, 65, spent six years in Perth as an operating theatre technician and Sarah made the journey to see him in 1972.

"She was a tough woman and whenever she saw a snake, she'd shrug it off, maybe even poke it with a stick," said Roy, who now lives in Brockley's Walk, Kinver. "I think she really enjoyed her time over there and absolutely loved the sunshine."

Charles passed away in 1976, but Sarah remained at Linton Road until shortly after her 100th birthday, when she received the first of two telegrams from the Queen.

There was more than 100 years between Sarah and her youngest grandchild, Alicia, and she was also great-grandmother of two.

Sarah passed away peacefully on December 7 with family at her side, at Woodlands Gate Rest Home, Pedmore, where she had been a resident for the last five years.

Her son Michael, 67, said his mother would be remembered fondly. "She was always there for us and lived for her family. She was a wonderful mother."

## Homes plan approved for sports pitch

SEVENTY HOMES are due to be built on a sports pitch in Halesowen despite the plans being labelled "deplorable".

The proposals for flats and houses on the site of Coombs Wood Sports and Social Club were given the go-ahead on December 13.

Residents are currently fighting plans for the club's new site in Stewarts Road, with a public inquiry due to be held by the planning inspectorate in January.

And, despite being given approval, the housing scheme on the existing cricket pitch between Lodgefield Road and Coombs Road will not go ahead until the future of the club's new site had been secured.

Councillor Geoffrey Southall said: "The whole concept is deplorable. I accept the principle of building new homes but I feel this is a desecration of a very nice area."

But fellow committee members disagreed and voted to approve the plans for 17 two-bedroom flats along with nine two-bedroom, 18 three-bedroom and 26 four-bedroom houses.

Original proposals for 80 homes had been given outline approval in September, 2009.

These had been reduced to 70 to accommodate a three-storey L-shaped "barrier block" containing flats, to reduce the effects of noise disturbance from a nearby industrial site.

Only one letter of objection to the proposals was received, but hundreds of residents have united to oppose the new sports club plans for the Coombs Wood Green Wedge.

Campaigners wrote to the Government demanding an inquiry after planning permission was granted in April.

## House will be turned into a taxi office

A VICTORIAN house in Dudley will be turned into a taxi office after plans were given the go-ahead.

The property in Wolverhampton Street, next to the Dudley College campus in the town, will become the base for a taxi firm.

The business will be limited to operating just three taxis to stop cars spilling over into a nearby Dudley Council car park.

Planning permission was granted by the authority's development control committee earlier this month.

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## Teaching 'icon' retires after 35 years at school

DEPUTY headteacher John Simms has said farewell to The Kingswinford school where he has become an 'icon' over the past 35 years.

Mr Simms, aged 58, joined The Kingswinford School as head of PE and later set up the IT department and rose through the ranks to become deputy head 12 months ago.

He is retiring to spend more time with his family and on his hobbies – including golf and ballroom dancing.

During his time at the school he has seen well over 5,000 pupils through their secondary education. Colleague Shaun Callaghan, science curriculum leader, said: "He is Mr Kingswinford – he's like a stick of rock with 'Kingswinford' running right through him.

"He's an icon here and will be sadly missed."

### Special

Colleagues organised a splendid send-off for him at Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club, even fixing it for 75-year-old Keith Dent, his old French teacher at Wednesbury Boys High School who inspired him to join the profession, to attend.

Mr Simms's first job, 36 years ago, was as probationary teacher at Alexander High School, Tipton, and he went straight on a year later to The Kingswinford School in Water Street, where he spent the rest of his career.

"There's something about this school – a family atmosphere, it's a very special place," he said.

"When I started here there were about 450 pupils but now there are 920 – and staffing has trebled to around 120 teachers and support staff."

"This places pulses through my veins and it was an extremely difficult decision to take to retire and leave the kids, the school and



John Simms with pupils, clockwise from bottom left, Ben Rudd, Courtney Smith, Jacob Wedderburn, Aaron James and Reece Bills and, inset, John teaching PE in 1980

my colleagues. But I now have three grandsons and I would like to spend more time with my family and on my hobbies."

Mr Simms lives with his wife, Eileen, in Mannerley Lane, Telford. He and his wife took up ballroom dancing two years ago following in the footsteps of his late

parents, John and Gwen Simms, of Wednesbury, who were professional ballroom teachers.

Principal deputy head, Bronwyn Hedley, said: "All our students know him very well and he always puts the children and staff first. He will leave a hole here."



### GAMES

## Getting creative with your NDS

### Art Academy (Nintendo)

GET creative with your DS or DSi with this learning to draw and paint package. Your artist guide Vince will help you pick up the basics and, if not exactly a masterpiece, you should soon have some pretty decent pictures to show off to your friends.

You can also use the DSi/Dsi XL camera to turn your photos into works of art.

The stylus can act as various sorts of brush or type of pencil from 2H to 2B and reacts in a very realistic way on your touchscreen canvas.

You have a palette to call upon with colour wheel, paint tubes and water with which to mix the paints.

Vince is ready to give budding artists some tips or you can always go into free paint mode if you just want to get on with creating a freehand picture. Mistakes can easily be put right. And when you're happy with the results, you can store more than 80 pictures in your own gallery.

### The Penguins of Madagascar (3, THQ)

Join the mischievous penguins from the hit Madagascar animated movies, Skipper, Kowalski, Rico and Private on stealthy missions as they take on three tasks: Throwing King Julien a birthday party, finding the missing Mort and ridding the zoo of snow. This involves plenty of wisecracks and some fun mini-games and some pretty nifty acrobatic moves by these tough guy penguins. Good fun.

### Super Scribblenauts (12, WB)

Already one of the most imaginative games on DS, Scribblenauts has been massively improved in its sequel. The hero Maxwell is a lot easier to manoeuvre now he's controllable with the game pad, though if you prefer you can still use the stylus to guide him.

But in the game tagged 'Think It, Write It, Solve It' it's the amazing range of creatures and things you can create in the game simply by writing the word for it that impresses. In this new version many thousands of words are recognised – excluding rude words and trade-

names – and for the first time you can use adjectives too, so whereas once you wrote 'mouse' and the familiar little beast was conjured up, now you can write 'flying mouse' to create your own fabulous mutant.

Your imagination can really take flight as you create ways to help Maxwell complete his challenge. He's got more than 100 puzzles to solve, in order to win his 'Starfish' rewards. This will keep kids occupied for hours.

### Dictionary (3, THQ)

The popular board game is brought to the DS to test your descriptive powers and drawing ability as you try to guess words from sketches made by other members of your team or by your Nintendo DS. There are easy, medium and hard settings and solo, pass and play and co-op quiz versions of the game. Your DS-owning friends can also join in with a wireless game.

### 101 In 1 Sports Megamix (3, Nordcurrent)

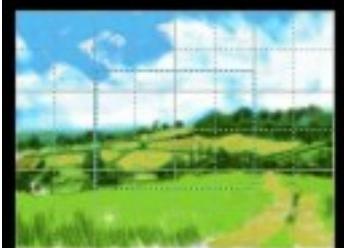
101 games in one may sound too good to be true and in a way it is because these are not high quality sims from the Lithuanian games house Nordcurrent. You start off with 10 sports and unlock the others as you earn points playing the existing games.

Little skill is involved and some of the games are very repetitive. There are multiplayer and wireless options if you want to share the medium.

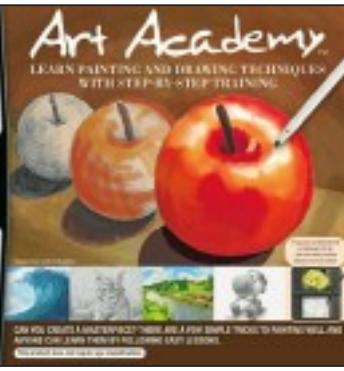
### Princess Isabella Witch's Curse (7, GSP)

More than 130 scenes to explore and 40 puzzles to solve as Princess Isabella and her fairy guide try to lift the curse placed on the royal family, trapping them behind mirrored walls. There's also some monsters to battle and mini-games to play before the final showdown with the witch. The graphics are a little disappointing given that this is a port from a PC title but this remains a solid adventure game for kids.

Nintendo DS/DSi round-up by Leon Burakowski



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The Talbot – a roaming mistress

# Licensed for spirits

**A** couple of authors have been looking at the grisly past of the Black Country's most haunted pubs – and there are some spooky stories to be told.

The Whittington Inn, on the A449 near Kinver, has several high profile spectres associated with it, according the book *Beer and Spirits*.

Staff and customers have seen a monk hiding there – perhaps dating back to the Reformation when Catholics hid in fear of their lives at pub. It is also reported that Lady Jane Grey stayed at there. The ghost of Lady Jane, who was briefly Queen of England in the 16th century, has been spotted many times over the years. Even on the road outside the car park there have been numerous sightings of notorious local highwayman Captain Kitson – so be careful on your way home!

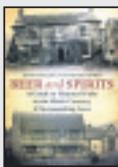
## Light-hearted

The Crooked House, Himley, is a famous old pub with tales to tell. Formerly an 18th century farmhouse, it has been visited by the apparition of a young parlour maid. A psychic identified the woman as Polly and she can sometimes be seen standing near the old fireplace.

Many legends in the book by David Taylor and Andrew Homer are of a light-hearted nature. There is the story of Anne Horton, a 'lady of the night' who is said to follow young men home from The Giffard Arms, in Wolverhampton city centre.

But other tales take a more poignant turn. The Talbot Hotel, Stourbridge, dates back to 1685 and this rich history includes an 18th century landlord's mistress who has been spotted roaming the building in search of her dead child.

Pubs in the Black Country are said to have spooky things going on, **ADAM BATE** dips into a new book that reveals some of the most haunted



The Old Still Inn, King Street, Wolverhampton, also has a disturbing history. Built in the early 1750s, the presence of a former licensee who hung himself in the 1900s is still felt in the pub. A second hanging of a young child is said to have occurred years later – and the sobbing can often be heard from the upper floors of the building.

Highbury Brewery Stores, Walsall, is a Victorian pub on a site going back to medieval times and when workmen began renovating the pub in 1998 they were shocked by some of the strange events.

Tools regularly went missing and it was assumed to be a practical joke until one workman was confronted by a disembodied head when alone in what is now the Cellar Bar.

When a pub has been around as long as The Manor House, West Bromwich, it is bound to have a history. This historical gem boasts a 14th century moat and a chapel that may date back to the late 15th century.

But The Manor House is also thought to be home to a variety of apparitions. There is the nervous man who haunts the great hall and even the large black cat that

stalks the upper solar bar. Even reconstructed pubs cannot escape ghostly activity. The Bottle and Glass was moved to the Black Country Living Museum in 1979 from its previous location in Brierley Hill Road, Brockmoor, near the Stourbridge Canal at the top of the 16 locks.

It was there that Minnie Holden, who lived at the pub for periods between 1914 and 1928, first experienced unusual activity. But staff at the museum still believe the Bottle and Glass to be haunted and have reported strange, inexplicable noises coming from the pub.

The Horse and Jockey, Wednesbury, is a Victorian pub that was, according to legend, the scene of a tragic suicide.

A man walked into the pub, ordered a double brandy, drank it and promptly shot himself. His ghost – known to staff as Cyril – is thought to be still haunting the premises.

## Beady eyes

At the Beacon Hotel, Sedgley, a spooky painting of former landlady Sarah Hughes has been unnerving managers of the Victorian pub for years. The beady eyes of her portrait in the sitting room seem to follow visitors as she keeps a watchful eye over her pub.

Mr Taylor founded Parasearch, a West Midlands group that investigates paranormal phenomena in 1896. Mr Homer is a past vice chairman of the organisation.

They said: "While the stories and accounts in this book are not meant to offer any proof or conclusive evidence of ghosts, they do offer a fresh look at new and more traditional accounts of haunted pubs in the Black Country and the surrounding area."

*The book, featuring more than 60 local pubs across nearly 100 pages, is available through Amherst Publishing priced at £12.99.*



The Giffard Arms – haunted by a lady of the night



The Crooked House – visited by Polly



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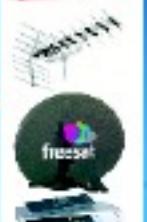
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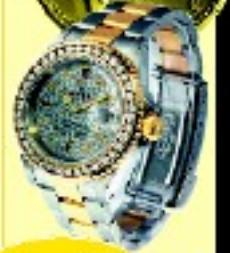
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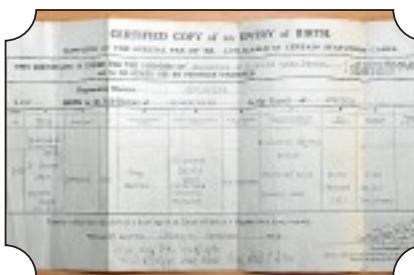


GARRISON MILITARY POLICE

ABBASSIA, 1937.



A snapshot of the Garrison Military Police in Abbassia, in 1937, with Mr Harris second from the left on the back row



Mr Harris's birth certificate, shows he was born on January 9, 1917, in Bower Lane, Quarry Bank



Roland Harris on horseback



The suitcase found in the loft at Alexandra House - at the top are two wallets with Egyptian print and, right, the inside of one of the wallet with a photograph of Rowland Harris during his army days

itary Police in Abbassia in 1937. Staff at the care home are now hoping to trace his family and are appealing for them or anyone with information to get in touch.

Naomi Jones, care manager at the home, said: "These need to be in the care of someone related to him."

"Some of these letters are so sad and they would help the family learn about this man's life."

If you are related to Mr Harris or have any information call Alexandra House on 01384 77441.

# Discovered, a suitcase packed full of memories



Some of the photographs, including family shots which do not include Rowland Harris

A suitcase containing poignant letters from a Black Country soldier who died aged 26 in the Second World War has been discovered in a Dudley care home.

The stash of documents, which also included photos, was found in the loft of Alexandra House, Pensnett, when a maintenance worker was searching for Christmas decorations.

They reveal details of the army career of Rowland Harris, from Dudley, dating back to when he signed up in 1934 to his death in 1942.

In a series of letters sent by the former Quarry Bank Council School pupil to his mother while he was on service, he assured her that he would soon return, but it appears he never did.

While the documentation shows the gunner in the Royal Regiment of Artillery began serving in Egypt in 1936, it also reveals a statement of his death from the army which says he was killed by "enemy air fire" in the Middle East Battle on March 31,

1942. He was buried at a military cemetery in Halfaya Sollum, Egypt, and a photo of the grave was sent to his family.

It is thought that the mystery case belonged to his mother Elizabeth, who died in 1953, before being passed on to his sister Dora. It is not known if she is still alive, but staff at the care home believe she once stayed there.

In a note Mr Harris sent on January 1, 1941 to his mother's home at Bower Lane, Quarry Bank, he says: "Mother, I am perfectly alright now, but have been in hospital for a few weeks with nose trouble, but everything is running smoothly once more."

## Fears

"The war won't last forever so don't be surprised if one day you see me again come up the garden path and I'll be much the same."

Another message passed on Mr Harris' congratulations to his brother John after his first son was born, while expressing fears over his hair loss due to stress.

Written on August 13, 1938, it

reads: "John says that the baby features me but I doubt it because my hair is steadily falling out and I have tried all sorts of hair restorers but without any success."

"Never mind, I suppose I shall retain it when I return to England."

"I hope to be in England in 15 months time. I know it is rather a long wait for us all but I still have a service here to accomplish."

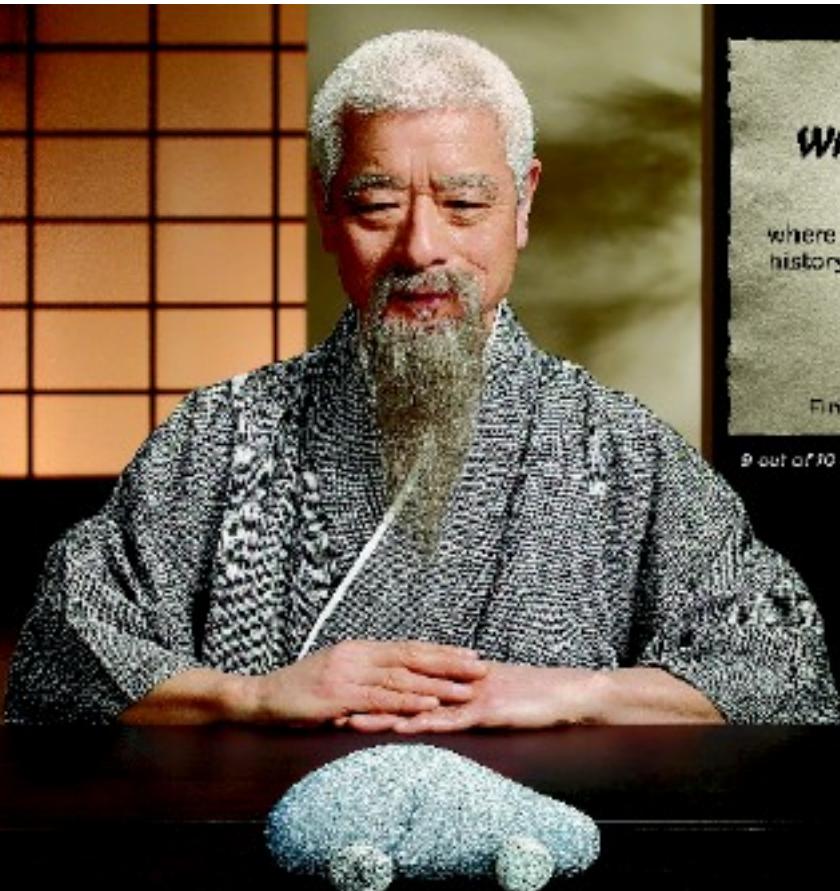
Another note speaks of the increase in the cost of living in Britain due to the war and his concerns that his mother would not cope on her own.

Mr Harris writes: "I got your correspondence yesterday and I'm pleased to hear you got the money alright."

"Mother, please don't send me anything for I can acquire everything here much cheaper than you earn at home."

"I also know that nowadays a penny costs a shilling so I implore you not to send me anything. If you should ever need anything let me know and everything I have is yours."

The case also holds a number of photos of Mr Harris on service including a group photo of the Garrison Mil-



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## thechronicle

### Jack proves to be master of his trade

A 20-year-old Black Country carpentry apprentice has scooped a top accolade after being named Apprentice of the Year by the Stourbridge-based Western region of Mansell Construction.

Jack Carey, from Stourbridge, was given the award after working on several major Mansell projects across the region.

He is a key member of the refurbishment team which has developed a reputation for high quality fit-out work for a wide and diverse client base.

Highly Commended in Mansell's apprentice awards was 20-year-old Steven Lediard, from West Bromwich.

Jack studied for his NVQ in carpentry at

Walsall Housing Group's training centre, after which he completed his NVQ level three at Stourbridge Apprentice Training Centre.

He was presented with his award by divisional manager Andy Price and construction manager Dean Howard at Dartmouth Park, West Bromwich, where Jack is currently involved in Mansell's latest project to help restore the park to its former glory.

Highly Commended in Mansell's apprentice awards was 20-year-old Steven Lediard, from West Bromwich.



Apprentice of the Year Jack Carey, from Stourbridge, with Mansell's Dean Howard and Andy Price, who presented the 20-year-old with his award

### Manor reduced to a pile of rubble

### Charity launch of talent contest

#### School's out for staff



Stephen Greenhalgh and office manager Marlene Elwell, who both retired from Roberts Primary School

THE school bell has sounded for the final time for Black Country staff who bid a fond farewell at the end of term.

At Roberts Primary School, in Lower Gornal, children waved off their assistant head teacher Stephen Greenhalgh, his wife, teacher Sofija Greenhalgh and the school's office manager Marlene Elwell who were both retiring.

Mr Greenhalgh, of Pedmore, Stourbridge, has spent 22 years at the school, which he joined following a stint teaching at Ellowes Hall School, Lower Gornal.

"It's the case now that families are coming back around with

their third generations which is nice," he said.

He started teaching sixth formers and reckons that he has taught around 10,000 in his 34-year career.

The 56-year-old is planning a three-month round the world cruise with his wife Sofija who is also leaving her teaching position at the school.

Grandmother-of-two Mrs Elwell, aged 60, was presented with flowers and cards made by pupils.

The school administrator, of The Northway, Sedgley, said: "The atmosphere among staff has been really good and in general this is a real community school."

IT was once a stately manor home at the centre of a Black Country beauty spot, but now the 19th century Saltwells House has been reduced to a pile of rubble.

Bulldozers demolished the building within Saltwells Nature Reserve, Netherton, leaving just bricks, girders and wooden beams.

Decades old wooden doors were strewn among the debris marking a sad end for the landmark.

It has taken contractors Winterton Architects less than a month to demolish Saltwells House, which was built in the 1800s.

Dubbed a "jewel in the crown", the house was built by the Earl of Dudley but had succumbed to vandals since shutting in 2001.

It had been subjected to countless attacks by youngsters smashing windows, lighting fires and spraying graffiti on the walls.

#### Important

The building had previously been used as a school and a nursing home.

Councillor Bryan Cotterill, who helped lead a campaign to save the building, said the group was now looking to the future.

"It didn't take long at all to demolish it and it is the end of an era for the area," he said.

"Now it is even more important to start pulling together a long term plan for the site. We think that the contractors have demolished the site before others come in to clear away the rubble."

Dudley Council and developer Dudley Public Sector Partnership are drawing up proposals for the site.

Campaigners say they are keen for more details to be released on the redevelopment of the area of the nature reserve, off Pedmore Road, near Brierley Hill.

It had become a magnet for vandals after falling into disrepair and was sold to developers earlier this year.

Around 2,000 signatures were collected by the Saltwells Action group to try and save the doomed house from demolition.

#### Walking at the Nest

WALKERS can join a ramble at Dudley's Wrens Nest Nature Reserve on January 5 from 10am to noon. Meet at Mons Hill College car park, Wren's Hill Road. Call 01384 812785.

#### Difficult

Winners from each category and age range will be invited to a celebration dinner at Halesowen College's restaurant where trophies and certificates will be presented.

Foundation director Keith Bate said: "This is the first year we have held this competition and we are really eager to see the range of talented young people."

"I know already that the judges will have a really difficult decision."

"I would urge everyone to get their entry forms filled in as soon as possible."

Entry forms and the terms and conditions can be downloaded from the foundation's website www.halesowenfoundation.org

#### Use change for stables

A BID to convert stables near Stourbridge into a residential property has been given the go ahead.

A planning application for the work at Stourton Hill Stables on Bridgnorth Road, Stourton, has been approved by South Staffordshire District Council.

### Media employees give festive boost

A SACKFUL of presents for children was collected by staff at a Brierley Hill-based media firm. Virgin Media staff got into the festive spirit by organising a present collection for the Four Steps to a Smile appeal at the company's offices at The Waterfront.

More than 200 gifts were donated. Four Steps to a Smile goes to children's homes in the Midlands to compile Christmas wish lists from children and young adults who may not otherwise receive a gift.

Once the charity completed the list, businesses and members of the community were asked to purchase one of the gifts.

The presents were then collected and distributed, or are dropped off under the Christmas tree at Old Square shopping centre in Walsall, before being opened on Christmas Day by the children.

### Walkway planned for car dealership

TWO plots of open space in Sandwell will be turned into a walkway and garage.

A 426 sq yd plot of land, which is next to the former Crown Works, Newtown Lane, Cradley Heath, is to be transformed into a landscaped walkway for a car dealership, called Motor Market, in School Street.

A 165 sq yd plot of land which had been earmarked for open space off Dunkirk Avenue in West Bromwich is to become a garage with off-road parking for the next door resident.

A Sandwell Council spokesman said that there was no covenant restricting the land for open space but any residents wishing to object should send comments in writing to the head of corporate property at Sandwell Council House in Freeth Street in Oldbury by January 20.

### Cut in number of homes in new plan

PLANS to build homes on the site of a former Dudley drilling works are to go before planners for a second time – despite being rejected earlier this year.

David Wilson Homes has altered its plans for housing development on the old M&J Drilling Works site, in Holloway Street, Lower Gornal. It is now seeking permission to build 74 homes rather than the original 76 to follow recommendations made by planning chiefs.

The developers hope the change will find favour when it comes before planners in the New Year. The developer says the reduction in the number of homes will also allow for changes in the development design.

The scheme was resubmitted on December 8 and is expected to be discussed by the committee again in January or February.



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## Sunday TV



25

BBC1, Sun

Police Scotland seems to have been beaten by the TV investigation of late. First he appeared on Channel 4's *Take on Ken Follett*, The Prince of the Party, now he's starring in his new offering, which is based on a series of novels by Michael Dobbs. Scotland plays the lead, playing Arnold Zell, a determined but dim detective who, in the first edition, re-investigates a multiple-murder. Scotland's series, *Reckonings*, follows *Over There* and *11.11*, which were also based on books by Mr. Dobbs. Benedict Cumberbatch, his sparring partner, also concurring to the series. Zell's wife, *Reckonings*'s co-writer, is the condition. Head Productions did the drug deal. Lundini says Britain is a "very nice place to work."

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# £625,000 Bugatti heads top 10 sellers at auction

Leading vehicle auction company, British Car Auctions (BCA) has drawn up its top 10 of unusual vehicles sold during 2010.

The company handles an enormous variety of vehicles during the year, with the vast majority being the popular makes and models we all drive from day to day.

But with up to 3,000 vehicles being sold every day from its 21 locations, BCA also sells vehicles that are weird, wonderful or

just hugely valuable. BCA's Tim Naylor said: "This year's big ticket items were a 2006 Bugatti Veyron, which went for £625,000 and a 2008 Rolls Royce Phantom, which realised £195,500."

"Both sales created a huge amount of interest with buyers registering from all over the UK and even further afield."

"The most unusual vehicles we sold were a pair of Road Trains, more often seen at beach resorts and other visitor attractions.

"The New Holland Leisure train sold for £4,900, while the Italian made Dotto Train realised £2,500."

BCA also sold a lavishly appointed one-

off Mobile Office with 12 workstations based on an Iveco truck for £38,500.

"Ironically it had been used to promote recycling and was being recycled itself!" Tim said.

"We also held a sale of 'barn find' classic cars, previously in the hands of one owner from the Margate area and hidden in lock-ups and garages for a number of years."

"The star of the show was a 1959 Ford Zodiac Convertible which made £6,300 despite being in bits and pieces."

Charity auctions this year included a pink Smart Car supporting the Royal Marsden Cancer Campaign and the

Bangers4BEN sale, which raised £5,350 towards the Motor Industry Benevolent Fund.

"We also sold a beautifully restored Royal Mail Morris Minor van with all the funds raised going to Barnados," Tim added.

"BCA also had cars with a showbiz connection. In November, we sold a Honda CR-Z Hybrid Coupe for £18,500, formerly owned by Justin Hawkins, ex-lead singer from The Darkness, while earlier in the year a vintage Ford Cortina 2000GT previously featured on the BBC's Culture Show was sold."



Vehicle	Notable Features	Price
2006 Bugatti Veyron EB 16.4	Just one of 300 Bugatti Veyrons made	£625,000
Rolls-Royce Phantom drop head coupe	Part of a sale that also saw 266 cars sell for £4 million plus. A 2008 Lamborghini Gallardo Spyder E Gear 2 also sold strongly, realising £90,000 at 6,000 miles.	£195,500
A vintage Ford Cortina 2000GT	One of the last GTs produced and on a 1976 'R' plate, the car had been owned by the BBC since 2007 and starred on the BBC's Culture Show visiting a series of famous UK film locations.	£2,200
Honda CR-Z Hybrid Coupe 60 plate	Once owned by Justin Hawkins former lead vocalist from the Darkness	£18,500
2010 Pink Passion Smart Car ForTwo Coupe	Sold at auction to help raise money for leading cancer hospital Royal Marsden	£10,500
New Holland Leisure Roadtrain	A diesel-powered road train ideal for a fun fair or theme park.	£4,900
Bangers4BEN Sale fire-finished modified Nissan 100 NX	The No Reserve Sale raised money for motor trades charity, BEN	Total raised £5,350
Iveco Euro Cargo modified truck	Converted to mobile office/classroom and used to promote recycling.	£38,500
1970 Morris Minor Royal Mail Van	Pillar box red van auctioned for Barnados. It was used for deliveries in Dorset	£8,000
1959 Ford Zodiac 2.6 Convertible	Part of a 'Barn Find' sale finished in white over blue and sitting on white wall tyres	£6,300

## Electric motoring turns over new Leaf to save money

Independent experts have predicted that the new European Car of the Year, the Nissan Leaf, will retain a substantial 47 per cent of its on-road price after three years and 30,000 miles – better than hybrid and diesel engined rivals.

This has resulted in the cost of ownership falling even further, with low depreciation adding to the savings made from using cheaper, cleaner electricity as a fuel.

Charging the Nissan Leaf's batteries costs around £2 and the car has a range of more than 100 miles according to official figures.

In addition, electric vehicle drivers do not have to pay for a tax disc, are exempt from the London congestion charge and can park for free in some cities. Company car drivers can save even more, as the Nissan Leaf does not attract any Benefit in Kind liability, potentially saving thousands every year in tax.

For example, a company car driver paying 40 per cent tax and swapping a Vauxhall Astra 2.0 CDTi SE auto for a Nissan Leaf will find an extra £301.53 in their pay packet every month, which is like being given a rise of almost £5,000 a year.

### Hybrid

To make electric motoring affordable for private buyers the Nissan LEAF is now available on a Personal Contract Purchase (PCP) scheme, with the residual value being underwritten by Nissan. It means buyers can be an 'electric vehicle pioneer' and pay the same in monthly finance as a conventional hybrid or diesel car – but still make massive savings on running costs.

With a deposit of £3,850 for example, the Nissan Leaf can be had for just £397.17 per month. After three years the car can be handed back, refinanced or the customer can buy another Nissan.

Paul Willcox, managing director of Nissan Motor GB said: "Buyers can be confident that the LEAF will not lose value any faster than a conventional rival. Nissan is happy to show its confidence too and underwrite the future value using a PCP scheme."



The beautifully restored Royal Mail Morris Minor van, above, was auctioned to raise funds for Barnados and made £8,000 while, left, this Passion Pink Smart Car got some admiring looks as well as making £10,500 for leading cancer hospital the Royal Marsden



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Dial the number below the advert you wish to respond to and when prompted input the six digit box number.

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If an ad has an envelope icon next to it (as above) send your reply in an envelope (addressed to the advertisers Box number) Place this envelope in a further envelope addressed to **My Match, Classified Dept., Express & Star, Queen St, Wolverhampton WV1 3QL**. Include your name and address on the back of a cheque or Postal Order for £6 per reply (two replies for £10) Make cheques or postal orders to Express & Star. In your main letter, ensure you leave a contact number for the advertiser to reach you on.

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# match

## women seeking men

Ladies Text n' Chat. Text in now and chat to local people. Send : CHAT207 To : 65125 (T&C's below).

SHROPSHIRE female 40, seeks special local male to share life, tall, Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 355959

53YR old female, young at heart, likes cinema, theatre, meals out, pubs, walks, holidays, seeks genuine, trustworthy male, 48-56, Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 339275

TALL slim, attractive brown eyed blonde, 42, many interests, seeks fun loving cultured male to spend time with. ACA. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 355253

ATTRACTIVE single mum, 40, outgoing, seeks similar guy for good times, possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 348919

OPEN friendly Christian female, profess, seeks kind, caring, Christian male for friendship and more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 348867

PRINCE wanted, must be 6ft, loving, caring and honest, no old frogs. I am 50's and attractive. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 337465

WEST Midlands female, 4, attractive, slim, diverse, N/S, seeks slim, clean, attractive male. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 343735

LISA 32, size 8, seeks male, 32-48 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 346713

HELEN 38, one child, blonde hair, 5ft 6ins, slim, attractive, likes swimming, dancing, seeks male, 43-53 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 331399

MICHELLE black British, 30, curly, slim, size 12, 5ft 5ins, sociable, friendly, understanding, loves seeking male, 30-36 to enjoy romantic nights. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 317945

LADY N/S, car owner, seeks lonely, retired gent with old fashioned values for friendship/days out and holidays. Stourbridge, Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 354183

CURVY red haired female, been hurt in the past seeks older male to buy her flowers and mend her broken heart. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 373249

ATTRACTIVE slim blonde, 45, seeks honest, caring, genuine male, 45-55 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 349651

SINGLE mum, non drinker, seeks male for nights out, meals and lots of fun. Dudley, Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 353085

ATTRACTIVE nurse, 48, 5ft 6ins, cinema, walks, country, WLTM attractive male of similar age for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 341479

SLIM 32yr old blonde, kind, caring, good listener, honest, likes to have fun, seeks male. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 339373

BLONDE attractive, educated lady, tall, slim, curly, 47, seeks tall, professional, 40-52. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 362478

Pretty size 8 female, 19, seeks male to spoil and treat her like a Princess. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 330241

COUNTRY loving female, black hair, green eyes, GSOH, likes countryside, cosy nights in, music, seeks similar male. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 333797

LINDA 70's, likes theatre, dancing, seeks nice gent for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 355891

Hi I'm Emma, a 31yr old smiley lady. I love fun and am looking for excitement with a fun male, I want to make you happy, age unimportant. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 357658

FEMININE lady, attractive, intelligent and slim seeks genuine strong minded male; I have so many interests please call her team. ACA. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 355763

FRIENDLY outgoing, sociable lady, 34 but looks mid 20's (its true) WLTM adventurous male 18 - 65, I'm open to most aesthetics, happy to try most things. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 355761

SLIM attractive, self sufficient lady, 44, GSOH, seeks special male, 35-50 to share evening in/out, theatre, possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 351813

SLIM attractive, self sufficient lady, 44, GSOH, seeks special male, 35-50 to share evening in/out, theatre, possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 351813

LITTLE bit nice and definitely a little bit naughty! Imaginative curly blonde seeks male for kisses and cuddles. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 363428

ATTRACTIVE female, 45, slim, affectionate, intelligent, seeks honest, caring male for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 301001

FEMALE kind, giving, thoughtful, sensitive, seeks lifetime friend to love and understand me for who I am. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 350397

ATTRACTIVE tall, black female, 51, 6ft, slim-slim build, kind, honest, considerate, own home, seeks genuine, tall, faithful, 6ft plus male, 45-70 with own home for serious relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 349211

LADY 50, slim, GSOH, likes cooking, nights out, seeks genuine guy, 50-55 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323318

STEFF dark hair, single mum, small build, likes cosy nights in/out, seeks single dad, 30-40 for friendship, possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 333173

KAREN 47, 5ft 9ins, civil servant, attractive, down to earth, likes drink, dance, socialising, home life, seeks tall, professional male, N/S for loving relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 324349

ATTRACTIVE female, 42, slim, blonde, no ties, N/S, likes travel, nights out, weekends away, seeks slim male for possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 340201

MAUREEN seeks male 32-45 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323543

IRENE 72, N/S, active, 5ft 2ins, slim, blonde hair, seeks similar male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 331301

SINGLE mum, non drinker, seeks male for nights out, meals and lots of fun. Dudley, Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 352479

ATTRACTIVE slim blonde, 45, seeks honest, caring, genuine male, 45-55 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 340461

BLONDE female, 38, seeks male, 30-35, adventurous, and fun loving, daring and caring. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 327355

LADY 76, N/S, caring, respectable, WLTM, gentle, 70-78 for outings, holidays, day trips and friendship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 320759

ATTRACTIVE glamourous, black female, young 44, seeks male for friendship/dating and LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 339799

BLONDE female, 32, fun loving, likes letting her hair down and kicking her heels up, caring, considerate, seeks like minded male, 25-40. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323417

ATTRACTIVE widow, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, GSOH likes meals out, holidays, WLTM gent, 70-80 for friendship and happiness. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 334041

SEU young thinking 54yr old female, varied interests, likes music, walks, cinema, pets, football, seeks N/S, genuine male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 328177

RITA 32, size 16-18, 5ft 4ins, seeks male, 30-50 for friendship and more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 324709

STUNNING Caribbean black beauty, 33, size 10, 5ft 9ins, intelligent, caring, classy, seeks generous, solvent, romantic male, 33-45 for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 326751

SLIM attractive 44yr old female, N/S, no ties, likes travel, nights out, seeks male, 40-50 for LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 341491

ATTRACTIVE 40yr old female, blonde, slim, trendy, no ties, high morals, seeks slim male for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 316619

YOUNG looking, pretty female, 40, blonde, no ties, N/S, seeks attractive, refined male for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 316619

CURVY black female, seeks genuine male, 28-40 to make me laugh and have fun. Must have GSOH. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 317387

ATTRACTION 40yr old female, blonde, slim, attractive, likes travel, seeks male, 35-45 for fun, friendship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 317387

LADY 72, N/S, caring, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 317387

SARAH 20, attractive, brown hair/eyes, nice personality, like pets, seeks slim male for friendship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 317395

TALL slim, young at heart 48yr old female, seeks tall, kind hearted male for nights out and companionship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323863

LADY 6s, seeks male for friendship, holiday's and socialising. Car driver with lots to offer a car bonus. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 324265

PETITE blonde lady, 56, OHAC, likes countryside, nights out, dancing, cinema, theatre, holidays, seeks gent with similar interests. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 303395

LONELY blonde widow with no ties looking for love and romance again with lots of TLC. WLTM similar man. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 352547

FRIENDLY black female, attractive, 46, single mum, professional, seeks attractive, solvent, trendy, professional, genuine male for LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 334627

LONELY blonde widow with no ties looking for love and romance again with lots of TLC. WLTM similar man. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 334627

ROSEANNE 41, caring, loving, devoted, loyal, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329291

ATTRACTIVE divorced 55yr old female, size 10, 5ft 6ins, blue eyes, long dark hair, seeks tall, medium build, athletic guy to put the sparkle back into life. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 318203

LOUISE seeks nice male in her Christmas stocking. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 321491

WEST bromwich female, late 50's, modern, romantic, easygoing, seeks active, genuine male, 45-60 for LTR. Driver preferred. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 336759

ATTRACTIVE divorced single mum, 38, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, green eyes, seeks similar, honest, attractive, dark haired male, 35-43 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 320973

ATTRACTIVE divorced single mum, 38, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, green eyes, seeks similar, honest, attractive, dark haired male, 35-43 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 320973

ROSEANNE 41, caring, loving, devoted, loyal, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329291

ATTRACTIVE female, 56, 5ft 1ins, blue eyes, seeks male, 45-60 for LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 326119

GENUINE easygoing lady, 80's, N/S, seeks like minded gent, 65-75 for friendship and company. Must be genuine, West Midlands. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 325719

60YR young lady, 5ft, 5ins, young outlook, GSOH, honest, caring, loving, likes travel, nights in/out, music, theatre, seeks honest, caring male, 58-68 for love and laughter. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 320753

CAROLE 55, loving, caring, GSOH, likes nights in/out, animals, N/S, seeks caring male, 50-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 316793

ATTRACTIVE widow, 5ft 7ins, genuine, sincere, OHAC, GSOH, likes dining out, holidays, seeks lonely, caring gent for friendship and happiness. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 331049

MARIA 38, blonde, 5ft 5ins, caring, likes nights in/out, seeks caring male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329319

CURVY intelligent young widow, 58, blue eyes, short dark hair, lovely figure, seeks tall, lively male to enjoy life's pleasures with. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 353429

DOWN to earth female, 45, 5ft 5ins, gentle, seeks male for LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 349468

FEMALE medium build, seeks nice N/S male, 40-42 for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338468

DOWN to earth female, 45, 5ft 5ins, gentle, seeks male for LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 337985

FEMALE medium build, seeks nice N/S male, 40-42 for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338204

LONELY biker, blonde hair, blue eyes, seeks nice lady for fun, maybe more. Single mum welcome. Hereford. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 334695

LADY 67, N/S, caring, seeks male, 60 plus for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323529

TALL slim, young at heart 48yr old female, seeks tall, kind hearted male for nights out and companionship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 323863

BEST friend, 21, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, reading, travel, socialising, seeks honest, down to earth male, 30-35. Single dad welcome. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 335297

KIDDERMINSTER man, 55, 6ft, slim, handsome, honest, true Knight, seeks Princess for happiness, romance and fun. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 308031

BLACK beauty, 29, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, reading, travel, socialising, seeks honest, down to earth male, 30-35. Single dad welcome. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 324265

SYLVIA 59, N/S, long blonde hair, 5ft 2ins, slim, OHAC, likes cycling, walks, keep fit, horse riding, holidays, theatre, films, eat out, GSOH, seeks male for friendship/LTR. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 321149

SHEILA 5ft 4ins, blue eyes, red hair, 16st, 50, likes music, meals out, country walks, seeks male, 45-54 who is sincere, fun loving for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 321455

SIMPLE mum, likes walks, nights in/out, seeks fun loving male with similar interests. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 320937

ATTRACTIVE divorced single mum, 38, 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, green eyes, seeks similar, honest, attractive, dark haired male, 35-43 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 318000

VALENTINA 32, black, slim, attractive, likes nights in/out, cooking, seeks male, 30-35 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 305797

ATTRACTIVE female, medium build, dark hair, hazel eyes, seeks male, 20-30 for relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 321491

ROBERT 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

CHARLES 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

ROBERT 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

CHARLES 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

CHARLES 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

CHARLES 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

CHARLES 34, 5ft 4ins, 14st, size 16, single mum, likes cooking, meals out, cinema, seeks male, 45-60 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 329962

## men seeking women

Guys Text n' Chat. Text in now and chat to local people. Send : CHAT207

To : 65125 (T & C's below).

ATTRACTIVE male, 53, seeks older female, 60-70 for fun. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, fashionable, athletic, 5ft 10ins, adventurous, seeks soul mate. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

ATTRACTIVE tall, black male, 6ft 3ins, slim, 40's, caring, genuine, GSOH, seeks female, 25-55 for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, fashionable, athletic, 5ft 10ins, adventurous, seeks soul mate. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, honest, caring, seeks similar female for nights out and possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, honest, caring, seeks similar female for nights out and possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, honest, caring, seeks similar female for nights out and possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, honest, caring, seeks similar female for nights out and possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165

CHRISTIAN male, 53, young attitude, honest, caring, seeks similar female for nights out and possible relationship. Tel No: 0905 436 6562 Box No: 338165









# sport

## LATE KNOCKDOWN COSTS THE TITLE

A CONTROVERSIAL knockdown in the last round cost Coseley's Jamie Ball the Midlands light middleweight title against Telford's Kieron Gray.

But Gray did not go home with the vacant area belt either, and may retire after the fight at Birmingham's Holiday Inn which Dudley referee Shaun Messer scored a 96-96 draw.

Ball was winning by two rounds going into the 10th.

But he took a count after a knockdown which, coupled with Gray winning the session, snatched the Midlands belt from



Jamie Ball, right, lands a shot in his title fight with Kieron Gray

### Legend Karlsson back at Monmore for 2011

WOLVES speedway legend Peter Karlsson has been confirmed for the Monmore club in 2011.

And the 41-year-old is expecting to be in great shape come March.

"I've been training well ever since the season stopped," said the veteran. "This has helped me to go even harder."

Karlsson, who skippered the Parrys International Wolves to the Elite League title in 2009, will be spending his 14th campaign in the black and gold. And not even a temperature of minus 26 degrees outside the car in his

from Gray early on.

He had already bled the nose of his 32-year-old Shropshire opponent, who was running out of ideas and starting to swing wildly with Ball comfortable on his toes in the eighth round.

The younger fighter got behind his jab and further caught the eye with a rattling left in the ninth and all he had to do was survive the last round to lift the title.

Crucially, it fell apart, although Ball remained adamant he had done enough to win the fight.

He said: "Kieron Gray was a really difficult opponent who was strong and came to win, I take my hat off to him."

"But it was me who landed body shots and head shots. He was loading up with the big right hand every time and I blocked it almost every time he came in."

"I can't see how he drew the fight and that is what is frustrating me."

"It's very disappointing, a draw is just as bad as a loss in my eyes."

There was further heartache for the Dudley contingent as Dean Anderson's unbeaten start to life as a professional was halted in his third fight after a shock stoppage against Birmingham's Sid Razak.

Late replacement Razak smelled blood after connecting with a right uppercut. Anderson, instead of tucking up and hanging on, continued to trade blows and after taking further punishment referee Messer stepped in and stopped the light welterweight contest 42 seconds into the second round.

#### Injury

But there was better news for Stourbridge's Kevin McCauley, who banished the memory of losing the Midlands welterweight title earlier this month by beating Birmingham's Dee Mitchell.

The light middleweight six-round contest was thrown together at four days' notice when Tipton's Lee Glover pulled out with a groin injury but both fighters were up for the clash.

However, it was McCauley who held the upper hand as the fight wore on and off with the jab after a big shot had rocked Mitchell's head back in the third.

Referee Messer scored the contest 60-57.

## Delport decision lifts Stourbridge

STOURBRIDGE have been handed welcome news – former Springbok international Thinus Delport has agreed to extend his stay with the National One side.

And the Stourton Park player-coach, who joined Stourbridge during the summer, will take on a new role as skills and performance coach in addition to his work alongside head coach Tony Windo.

Delport, who has made several try-scoring appearances for Stourbridge this term, has agreed to an initial one-year extension to his contract.

His continued presence at one of the Midlands' most ambitious clubs is a measure of their long-term aims.

Stourbridge chairman Dick Jeavons-Fellows said: "Thinus shares our ambitions and

## Dedication lands accolade for golf club

HABBERLEY Golf Club has won a top accolade for its dedication to junior and beginner's golf.

The club, near Kidderminster, has been awarded GolfMark accreditation.

The English Golf Union (EGU) and English Women's Golf Association

(EWGA) developed the (EWGA) developed the nised across the country. More than 30 other

sports, including tennis and rugby, are also using the alliance to add value to their accreditation

schemes. More than 10,000 sports clubs have

been awarded Clubmark accreditation. Benefits of GolfMark accreditation include raising the club's profile, further development of coaches and volunteers and greater access to funding.

GolfMark evaluates

clubs on three areas in their junior section: Coaching and playing; club environment, including ethics, and child protection and duty of care. EGU and EWGA development officers continually conduct assessment meetings, offering advice and guidance to golf clubs on how to further enhance their junior sections and beginner initiatives.

## Shorter Samurai put their judo rivals to the sword



Hamish Beaumont on his way to a gold medal. Pictures: DE Photos



Darcie Hancocks displays her golden reward

## Talks on deal for Harriers stalled

BUSINESSMAN Chris Swan has refused to rule out fresh talks over a financial rescue package for Kidderminster Harriers.

But the Warwickshire entrepreneur admitted that discussions were deadlocked over a possible takeover at Aggborough.

The Blue Square Premier outfit was looking to raise £150,000 quickly to meet wage and tax commitments and avoid the threat of administration.

The current directors met Swan – the man behind property business Cobalt Developments – but issued a statement announcing he had decided to withdraw from the proposed takeover.

And Swan said: "It's gone as far as I am concerned and I am not sure if it can be picked up."

"I am keeping my eyes open and will see what happens, but it's difficult to know what is going on there at the moment."

#### Table

"You never say never, but the door is not open at the moment."

"However, if certain stumbling blocks can be resolved, we could get around the table again."

Director Keith Chandler, in an open letter on the club's website, set out a review of the discussions held with Swan.

In it he said that Swan had hoped to obtain 100 per cent of the club's shares but that it was believed some of those who held only a few shares may have died, with the whereabouts of the shares unknown.

Chandler said an offer was made to Swan which would have covered 86 per cent of the shares. The club constitution allows outright control to anyone holding 75 per cent or more.

Meanwhile, Harriers have moved quickly to rearrange the home Blue Square Premier game with Kettering that was postponed. It will be on Tuesday, January 11 (7.45pm).

The Dudley Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford, on Thursday, December 30, 2010.

## Weight and see for Cater

STOURBRIDGE fitness firm Versaclimber UK has unveiled a new ambassador.

He is Paul Cater, head of strength and conditioning at London Welsh Rugby Club and a consultant to professional foot-balls in Spain and the UK.

The consultancy role will see him help to promote the firm's Versaclimber weightless exercise machine across Europe.

By using an entirely user-defined force, the Versaclimber offers a versatile workout, which sees the user pulling a rope away from the machine to trigger resistance. The harder the rope is pulled, the harder the machine pulls it back when it retracts.

Cater is now an ambassador for the product having been an enthusiastic user of it in his career. He came across the Versaclimber

as an American football and baseball trainer in the USA.

Cater brought one with him when he was hired by London Wasps Rugby Club in 2005.

"Rugby can be the hardest sport to train for at top flight level," he said.

"I've found that the weightless training of the Versaclimber helps to fill the gap that free weights leave."

values. His experience as a professional player, and his worldwide contacts at the top of the game, bring significant strength to our coaching set-up.

"Stourbridge aims to be home for the region's best players," he added.

"Top coaching staff is a key part of the mix," declared Jeavons-Fellows.

"Thinus will be considering every element of what Stourbridge offers to ambitious players."

"Professional conditioning programmes that prevent injuries will be under his remit, in addition to skills development."

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